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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR APRIL FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT STAND-POINT.

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APRIL 4, THE WORD MADE FLESH. John I., 1-18.

APRIL 11, THE FIRST DISCIPLES. John I., 35-51.

APRIL 18, THE FIRST MIRACLE. John II., 1-11.

APRIL 25, JESUS AND NICODEMUS. John III., 1-18.

MAY 2, JESUS AT THE WELL. John IV., 5-26.

From causes which, it is hoped, will not again occur, the Sunday School treatment of this month will be so brief as to amount to no more than barely keeping up the succession of articles.

The Gospel according to John makes fewer and briefer formal citations from the Old Testament than any of the other Gospels. In the five Lessons for this month, the Westcott and Hort New Testament prints but one brief passage as a citation, and Professor Toy's elaborate work on New Testament citations recognizes only the one instance. I do not care to dispute the correctness of these authorities, though it is sometimes a matter of differing judgments whether a clause should or should not be regarded as a quotation. But in any case, the fact that the author of John quotes less frequently than the other evangelists does not necessarily show that he was less familiar than they with the Old Testament books. At a certain stage of familiarity with a literary work, one is apt to quote largely from it; at a more advanced stage, he may find quotation superfluous, and content himself with allusions to the work, with employing its phraseology and its juxtapositions of ideas, his familiarity with it being thus assumed as a fact known to himself and his readers, rather than made evident in any more direct way. Something of this sort marks the relations of the author of the fourth Gospel to the Old Testament writings.

The Gospel of John begins with the phrase "In the beginning," *ἐν ἀρχῇ*. It is the same phrase by which the Septuagint translates *bereshith*, the opening words of Genesis. The Gospel proceeds to say, not that all thing were formed by him, but that all things "became" by him, *ἐγένετο*; again, the phraseology is that of Genesis, God said, Let there be light, *καὶ ἐγένετο φῶς*, etc. (*wayehi*). The first chapter of Genesis begins its narrative with the introduction of light into the darkness, and its becoming separate from the darkness; the Gospel begins with the light shining in the darkness, and no longer included within the darkness. The chapter in Genesis represents that all things were made by Jehovah's saying the creative words; in allusion to this, we are told in Ps. XXXIII., 6:

"By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made,
And all their host by the spirit of his mouth."

From this, directly or indirectly, comes the phraseology of the Gospel, when it says of "the Word" that all things were made by him, etc. This is true, irre-

spective of the relations of the language of John to the *λόγος* of Philo or of the early Gnostics, or the "wisdom" of Proverbs or of the Apocryphal books.

Again, the expression "and tabernacled among us," verse 14, can hardly be other than the familiar *Shakan bethokh*, used of Jehovah's dwelling among Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, Exod. xxv., 8, and many other places. The phrase "full of grace and truth," in the same verse, is a much better translation of *rabh hesedh we'emeth*, found in Exod. xxxiv., 6, and elsewhere, than any translation the Septuagint ever gives of these words. The meaning here is much illuminated, if we suppose that a distinct allusion to the passage in Exodus is intended; in the times when God gave Moses the law, he proclaimed to him His grace and truth, but he did not fully reveal them till the Christ came.

The one direct quotation with which we have to do is in John i., 51. The words "ye shall behold the heavens opened" are, perhaps, an allusion to Ezek. i., 1, or to one of the similar passages in other books. "The angels of God ascending and descending upon" is absolutely literal from the Hebrew of Gen. xxviii., 12. The Greek words of the quotation are the same which the Septuagint translation employs, but the free construction of the Septuagint is exchanged for a strieter rendering. This instance has great weight to show that the New Testament writers had access to the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and regarded it as of higher authority than the Greek. A correct understanding of the meaning of Jesus is here dependent on the recognizing of the true character of his words as a quotation. Jesus, by his insight into Nathaniel's thoughts, has convinced Nathaniel of his divine mission; but he promises that Nathaniel shall see yet more striking proofs of it; such proofs as came to Ezekiel when he saw the heavens opened; such as came to Jacob, when he saw angels of God ascending and descending.

A BOOK-STUDY: SECOND SAMUEL.

BY THE EDITOR.

I. GENERAL REMARKS.

1. The "General Remarks" prefixed to the preceding "Study" are applicable, for the most part, to this "Study:" (1) it is intended for students who need and feel their need of help; (2) it furnishes an order of work, not an order for presenting the results of work; (3) it calls for more work than some may desire to do, and, perhaps, for work in which some may not be interested; (4) the helps to be used are few, the aim being to incite the student to do his own work and not to lean upon other people's crutches; (5) the Revised Version should be used exclusively, except for comparison.

2. As aids, the following are recommended: (1) particularly, *The Second Book of Samuel*, by Professor A. F. Kirkpatrick;¹ (2) *The Kingdom of All-Israel*, by James Sime,² of which pages 265-409 are devoted to the period covered by our "Study;" (3) Vol. III. of *Hours with the Bible*, by Cunningham Geikie;³ (4) the

¹ New York: Macmillan & Co. 12mo, pp. 248. Price 90 cents.

² London: James Nisbet & Co. 1883. Pp. 621.

³ New York: James Pott & Co.